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ABSTRACT

Chapter 4 of a revised volume on school leadership, this chapter discusses the relative scarcity of women and blacks in educational administration. After decades of civil rights legislation and women's movement activities, there are fewer women and minority school administrators than there were 35 years ago. Arguing persuasively for educational diversity, the chapter first examines the attitudes and practices impeding both groups' progress. Women have been hampered by sex role stereotyping; negative attitudes of superiors and coworkers; lack of networks and mentors; and school consolidation efforts, which often result in fewer available positions. Although women's representation in administration, especially the principalship, has improved during the 1980s, blacks' representation has increased only slightly. During the 1960s, after the Supreme Court's historic desegregation ruling, the number of black school principals in 13 southern and border states actually dropped over 95 percent. The legal system of segregation has been replaced by an urban residential segregation that relegates black administrators to mostly black schools. Black administrators share numerous problems: difficult and financially troubled schools, role ambiguities, and unrealistic expectations from others. Compared with women, there are fewer blacks and other minorities in the graduate training "pipeline" for administrative positions. Affirmative action programs have had limited effects during the 1980s. Recent progress toward establishing hiring priorties, eliminating pay inequalities, developing a candidate clearinghouse, improving recruitment methods, and revamping training and internship programs is assessed. (MLH)

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# Chapter 4

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**David Coursen, Jo Ann Mazzarella, Lynn Jeffress, Margaret Hadderman**

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# Chapter 4

# Two Special Cases: Women and Blacks

**David Coursen, Jo Ann Mazzarella, Lynn Jeffress, Margaret Hadderman**

Educational leaders come in all ages, all shapes and sizes, and all temperaments. Studies of leadership have looked at many physical characteristics of leaders: height, weight, eye color, overall attractiveness. All these have been examined, and none has been found to significantly differentiate leaders from others. Significant differences are found, however, when one looks at two particular physical characteristics of educational leaders: sex and race.

Almost anyone who remembers "school days" has two images of school officials. The favorite teacher, in fact nearly every teacher, was probably a woman. But the feared and revered final authority, the principal, especially in high school, is likely to have been a man. When the memory then turns to the race of the principal, the pattern of the white, male school administrator begins to emerge.

## Effective Leadership and Quality Education

Today, the problems of women and blacks in public school leadership may seem a little passè. Surely these problems are dwarfed by our worries and fears about such major issues as school violence or shrinking resources. Surely, the problems of women and minorities were solved long ago.

Yet such a judgment is not only superficial but inaccurate. The extent to which women and minorities participate in administering the schools is one measure of education's real commitment to the ideal of equal opportunity for all Americans, an ideal that is far from being realized.

It is easy to be lulled into the false assumption that women and minority representation in educational leadership now roughly reflects their representation in the general population. Yet, as this chapter will show, this is not the case; progress in this direction has been disappointingly slow. Still too often, ability seems not to be the most important factor in the hiring process.

If sexual or racial characteristics are more important than ability in determining who is hired for positions of leadership and responsibility in the schools, the caliber of public education will suffer. The issue then becomes

quality education, and surely quality education is always important, is beyond political dispute, and is genuinely timely, never passè.

Staffing policies are as important to the educational process as is curriculum. The best policy decisions will come from administrations that include a variety of points of view. Women or members of minority groups have unique perspectives on certain problems, perspectives that can broaden and enrich the decision-making process at every level. In fact, a diverse staff may even help shape more desirable curricula. For example, women have a special sensitivity to sexism in study materials, just as nonwhites are more sensitive to racism.

## Learning from Role Models

Schools educate children not only by what is taught in the classroom, but also by what is shown about how the world operates. For this reason, too, the identity of administrators is important in determining how schools socialize their students. When there is someone in authority who has characteristics in common with a child, that person may become a role model, a figure for the child to admire and emulate. Thus school officials can teach children appropriate behavior and help shape their aspirations and attitudes.

Children may come to feel that it is normal for the kinds of people they see running the schools to fill all executive positions. Black children who see only whites in authority may conclude that blacks are excluded from power, that it is futile for them to strive for decision-making positions. Similarly, girls who see women only as teachers, taking orders from male principals, may become convinced that this is natural and inevitable, that the most they can hope for in life are positions subordinate to men. By thus teaching some children not to strive for their highest human potentials, the schools are encouraging the waste of human resources. Surely this is a perverse and destructive form of "education."

The representation of minorities in positions of school leadership also has implications for stemming the dropout rate, which is highest among black and Hispanic students. If the schools are to retain members of all cultural and racial groups, they must have leadership that is representative of all these groups. All races and cultures must feel that their concerns are sincerely being addressed by those with power in the school. Otherwise the alienation that begins in a discriminatory school system may accompany these students into an adulthood in which they become a drain on an already badly depleted society.

## To Leaders and Aspiring Leaders

It is important for today's educational leaders to become aware of the true situation regarding women and minorities in education.

Those in charge of hiring and promotion especially must understand the situation, how it got that way, and how it can be changed. Other leaders

need to become aware of the special problems faced by their female and minority colleagues so that they can offer support to those who have achieved leadership positions and to those who aspire to such positions. Finally, women and minority leaders and those seeking to become leaders need to understand more about the situation that exists outside their own subjective experience. If the path seems blocked, they need to know that there is some hope. If the path seems easy, they need to know that others still face obstacles.

## What about Other Racial Minorities?

In the literature on school administrators, "minority" is virtually synonymous with "black." This fact alone defines the status of Hispanics, Native Americans, and all other racial minority groups, who are denied even a token consideration.

This chapter reflects this situation, ignoring the status of all nonblack racial minorities in school administration, not because the subject does not demand attention, but because most writers tacitly assume, by their omissions, that it is simply not a big enough problem to consider. There is an urgent need for studies that will correct this imbalance and for more timely and comprehensive data collection efforts.

This chapter, then, is largely limited to discussing blacks and women. It is tempting to think that since both groups suffer from discrimination, being judged according to group roles rather than individual performances, they can be considered together. But discrimination is as complex and subtle as it is pervasive; what is true for blacks is not necessarily true for members of other racial minorities and may have nothing to do with women. For this reason, women and blacks are discussed separately.

# The Woman Administrator

The successes of the women's movement seem to justify the commonsense notion that discrimination against women in school administration is not serious and is rapidly disappearing. In fact, such optimism is false. The central facts about women administrators are that there aren't many of them and that the majority of women in the schools are not employed in executive capacities.

An abundance of vacant administrative positions will not necessarily solve this problem. The expected retirement of half of all U.S. principals within the next decade *should* create new opportunities for both women and minorities. But, first, they will need to be trained and certified to serve in these positions, and, second, school districts must change their hiring and promotion practices, which traditionally have favored white males. Barbara N. Pavan, an associate professor of educational administration at Temple University, told Blake Rodman (*Education Week*, June 10, 1987) that women are increasingly well prepared, are obtaining the necessary certification, and are applying for the posi-

tions; they often "end up being among the last two or three candidates, but don't get the job." The chief culprits are discrimination and sex-role stereotyping.

## Where Is She?

The relative scarcity of women executives in the education profession is well demonstrated by the data listed in table 1. According to the most recent survey, only 3.69 percent of superintendents are women. Effie Jones and Xenia Montenegro (1988) report that the current number of women superintendents is about 535 (out of a total of 14,500). This represents a 53 percent increase over the 350 women superintendents who were counted in a 1985 survey. Although such improvement is welcome, women are so far back of men that this rate of increase would have to recur every three-year period for nineteen years in order for women to reach parity with men.

**Table 1. Representation of Women in Educational Administration**

| *Survey Date* | *Source* | *Superintendents* | *Assistant Superintendents* | *Principals* | *All Administrators* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1987-88 | AASA data from Jones & Montenegro (1988) | 3.69 | 22.5 | 23.94 | 29.64 |
| 1987 | Feistritzer (1988) | 4 | — | 24 | — |
| 1984-85 | Jones & Montenegro (1985) | 2.67 | 15.5 | 21 | 26 |
| 1982 | Jones & Montenegro (1985) | 1.8 | 9 | 16 | 25 |
| 1980 | Jones & Montenegro (1985) | 1.0 | — | — | — |
| 1980 | McCarthy & Zent (1980) | — | 8 | — | 25 |

*All figures are percentages.*

Women are better represented in the principalship, where about 24 percent of the current job holders are female. Although the data show that the representation of women in this position has improved during the decade, the rate of increase is slight compared to that of women superintendents.

When we extend the comparison to the more distant past, we see that women's representation in the principalship is still far less than it once was. In

1928, 55 percent of all school principals were women. In 1948, the percentage had dropped to 41, in 1958 it was 38, and by 1968 it was only 22.

This pattern extends to the prestige of the administrative jobs women get. In a 1978 survey, David Byrne and colleagues discovered that 75 percent of female principals worked in schools of 745 students or less, whereas only 37 percent of male principals were employed in these smaller schools; also, 14 percent of male principals were assigned to schools of 2,000 or more, but only 1 percent of female principals were found in these larger schools. Recent studies show that women principals are more likely to head elementary than secondary schools.

Until recently, another interesting discrepancy between men and women administrators has been their ages. In a 1971 report, Dorothy Johnson noted that women principals were older and more experienced than their male counterparts. Between 1958 and 1968 (a decade in which the number of women principals declined by 16 percent) the median age of women in that position rose from 52 to 56, she said, whereas that of men stayed fairly constant at around 44.

This age discrepancy may be lessening, however. In a recent Educational Research Service poll (see Rodman), women administrators' average age was about 47. In 1984 the average age for all principals was 46, says Kathleen McCormick, referring to ERS data.

In summary, these figures indicate that few women work as school administrators, that the jobs women get are the lowest ranking ones, that women who get the jobs have been, at least in the recent past, somewhat older than men working at comparable levels, and that the situation needs to improve much more rapidly than at present. There still seems to be an unwritten policy that women be assigned "women's work" instead of executive responsibilities.

## A Woman's Place: The Power of Stereotypes

No single explanation can account for such widespread discrimination, but one important factor is the general acceptance of stereotypes about working women, in general, and women in administration, in particular. At the heart of all such stereotypes is the notion that a woman's place is in the home. This attitude persists despite the fact that women workers now constitute 44 percent of the U.S. labor force, compared to 29 percent in 1929. According to the 1987 *Economic Report of the President* (based on Bureau of Labor Statistics data), 55 percent of all married women work, including 50 percent of mothers with infants. Also, nearly 70 percent of single mothers work outside the home.

Sex role stereotypes may also help explain why the vast proportion of "professional" women workers are found in teaching and other semiprofessions such as nursing, social work, and librarianship. According to Mary Frank Fox and Sharlene Hesse-Biber, these female-dominated fields "have weakly developed theoretical bases of knowledge," "lack authority and autonomy," require less intensive training, and "tend to emphasize hierarchical ranks and dif-

ferential duties." In contrast to established professions like law and medicine, "success in the semi-professions implies administrative rather than practicing roles." Yet in all these fields, women occupy the lower-level positions and men the administrative positions. Even in law and medicine, women are concentrated in relatively low-status specialties.

Stereotypes have certainly influenced women's socialization process. In this society, women have been socialized to accept subordinate roles and limit their aspirations. Sakre Edson mentions numerous mid-1970s studies of women teachers qualified to be administrators but choosing to remain in the classroom. She notes other studies focused on female educational administration students who become discouraged about career mobility and use their degrees to "pursue employment as consultants, researchers, or government service employees." Edson's own study of Oregon women pursuing principalship positions shatters "the stereotype of the non-aspiring women in administration." The women in Edson's study cited some common barriers to success:

> Traditional female barriers such as family responsibilities and lack of confidence rank low in the frequency with which they were cited. The two barriers most often reported were lack of experience and discrimination.

More recently, Stephanie Marshall's interview of ten women superintendents disclosed the same hurdles—role prejudice and lack of access to secondary line-experience.

Stereotypes, one can assume, are the result of conventional responses to conventional questions, overt or implied. According to Charol Shakeshaft (1981), "the majority of the studies on leadership styles and effectiveness have been done for the purposes of seeing if women 'measure up' to men." This sexist way of doing research, according to Shakeshaft, must be reversed. "New questions need to be asked." Instead of asking, "What keeps women out of a man's world?" one can ask, "What changes can be made in the male world to facilitate women?"

Stereotypes about men, too, help explain the problem. Sari Knopp Biklen refers to a position paper prepared by the National Conference on Women in Educational Policy that maintains that the popularity of the view of the school as a business makes women less likely to be chosen for administrative positions. Biklen states, "As schooling becomes more of a business, those in administrative positions turn to their image of effective business managers: business men."

## Are Women Better Qualified?

Despite these persistent stereotypes, there is evidence that women possess both the required training and personality traits to become superior administrators. According to the *Digest of Education Statistics*, women's share of conferred doctorates in educational administration has steadily risen from 9

percent in 1970-71 to 42 percent in 1983-84. As Shakeshaft noted in 1987, the number of women currently in administrative training programs is nearly equal to the number of men.

Neal Gross and Anne Trask, in their landmark study of women in school management, found that the quality of pupil learning and the professional performance of teachers were higher, on the average, in schools administered by women. They also found that women exerted more influence over their teachers' professional activity than did men.

Virtually every evaluation of the comparative performances of women and men as principals has shown the complete inaccuracy of negative stereotypes of women administrators. In 1956, Vince Hines and Hilda Grobman reported on a survey in which women scored better than men in evaluations based on student morale, teacher morale, frequency with which teachers used desirable practices, and program development. Joan Meskin, after surveying all the studies, concludes:

> When we highlight some of the specific findings concerning women administrators in these studies—their propensity toward democratic leadership, thoroughness of approach to problem solving, and bent toward instructional leadership, as well as the general effectiveness of their performance as rated by both teachers and superiors—we puzzle over the small number of women administrators employed by school districts.

Two factors that may qualify women to be better principals than men are their longer teaching experience and their greater potential empathy with other women who still fill most teaching jobs.

While a few observers (for example, H. Lynn Erickson, Ruth Cimperman, and June Gabler) have argued persuasively that successful women administrators strive for androgynous or genderless leadership styles, other recent studies support Gross and Trask's gender-oriented findings. The superintendents in Stephanie Marshall's study viewed themselves as "social architects" rather than managers:

> They believed that their credibility was more dependent on their knowledge, expertise, communication skills, and authenticity. They saw their collaborative approach to leadership as being a result of both their socializing experience as women and as staff members rather than line positions they occupied prior to the superintendency. Without line authority, leadership was achieved through influence and expertise.

Another researcher, Joan Formisano, discovered that women principals tend to manage conflict by adopting an accommodating style that preserves interpersonal relationships. Shakeshaft (1987) goes one step further, suggesting that the traditional school structure "is itself antithetical to the ways women work best." Schools are unfortunately modeled after industry, with teaching separated from the administrative decision-making process.

"A female defined organizational structure probably would not have resulted in such overspecialization, in extreme forms of hierarchy or in administrators being mere managers," Shakeshaft says.

## Roadblocks to Women's Success

What these findings about women's qualifications actually indicate is that a woman must be better qualified than a man if she hopes to become a successful school administrator. In view of the difficulties she will face, she *has* to be extraordinary. She is confronted with different expectations than a man faces, and her actions are judged by different standards. Betty Friedan and Anne Grant West cite an attitude survey that solicits a response to the following statement, which suggests some of these differences:

> They may act exactly the same way, but they are called: *absent-minded* if they are men, *scatter-brained* if they are women; *intellectually curious* if they are men, *nosey* if they are women; planners if they are men, *schemers* if they are women; *sensitive* is they are men, *emotional* if they are women; *logical* if they are men, *intuitive* if they are women.

According to Charlene Dale, women in administration are treated differently than equally qualified men in comparable positions. Superiors hold certain tacit assumptions about women that make it difficult for them to advance. For example, it is simply assumed that a young woman will not be able to accept a new job if it means relocating her family. In a comparable situation, it would be assumed that a man would be free to move.

This is one way in which women are faced with performance expectations that become self-fulfilling prophecies. Professionals tend to be either job-oriented, finding satisfaction in careers, or place-oriented, finding satisfaction in friendships and activities in a specific location. If a professional woman is not offered promotions, if her job seems to be leading nowhere, she may become place-oriented relatively early in her career. Once this has happened, if a promotion finally *is* offered, it would be undesirable if it meant relocating. The woman professional might then refuse to move, "demonstrating" her "lack" of both mobility and ambition.

## The Obstacle of Negative Attitudes

Another important factor in job success is the attitude a male superior may have toward a new person working in his department. A supervisor naturally assumes that any man hired for a job is competent or he wouldn't have been hired at all. Even if he is unsuccessful, the results may be blamed, not on professional inadequacy, but on an "impossible situation." But if the same superior has misgivings about the ability of women, he will expect a new woman to fail and may even unconsciously look for signs of that failure. In addition,

if his commitment to her success is minimal, he may deny her any significant support. In such circumstances, the woman's chances of at least a perceived failure are thus very great. Not surprisingly, this may eventually cause her to lose self-confidence, to become disoriented on the job, and, finally, to perform according to the expectations the superior has done so much, albeit unconsciously, to confirm.

The "perceived failure" dilemma is compounded by male administrators' lack of candor in their performance evaluations of female subordinates. As Shakeshaft puts it in a 1987 paper,

> When a male subordinate makes a mistake, his supervisor tends to level with him, "telling him like it is." When a female errs, she often isn't informed. Instead, the mistake is corrected by others.

In other words, males get the criticism they need and the chance to improve their behavior, whereas women may hear nothing but praise "even if their performance is less than ideal." With no corrective feedback to go on, women can overestimate their proficiency and be shocked at being fired, demoted, or overlooked for promotion.

Men's discomfort with women in authority influences the leadership styles adopted by female administrators. As Shakeshaft notes, many women have found "normal" methods of establishing authority completely ineffective:

> Some women report that they try to look less authoritarian, less in charge, and less threatening in an effort to be effective. Many comment that "the less I threaten the men I work with, the more I am able to accomplish."

Women who learn to "downplay their power, intellect and skill" actually receive higher ratings from men than "women who are seen as more competent." H. Lynn Erickson, in profiling successful women principals, suggests that an androgynous, soft but firm approach works best for resolving conflicts.

Many of the attitudes that keep women down are insidious, hard to identify. For example, Patricia Schmuck describes some of the ways a teacher can be gradually prepared for an administrative position. A supervisor may delegate various responsibilities to the teacher, with the tacit understanding that promotion will eventually result if the duties are handled well. A supervisor who believes that men make better administrators than women will not be anxious to offer such promotional opportunities to women. Consequently, more men will be in positions to be promoted, and those who are promoted will be, by virtue of their informal training, more likely to succeed immediately in their new jobs.

Women's conceptions of cooperation and interpersonal trust may be another insidious factor accounting for their largely token representation on administrative teams. Elliot Z. Garfinkel found that women superintendents valued competency over trust and conceptualized trust as reliance on other team members' integrity and capacity to speak and perform their jobs well. In con-

trast, the male superintendents assigned trust the highest team value and defined this concept as the ability to share one's thoughts and opinions with other team members without ridicule or "betrayal" to people outside the group. This definition, according to Garfinkel, is consistent with the stereotypical role conception of management as a "closed circle" of like-minded teammates willing to play by the rules. Women administrators are simply overlooked as less trustworthy or enthusiastic team players.

## Lack of Networks and Mentors

There are other, even more subtle ways in which men, rather than women, are able to advance up the administrative ladder. Stephanie Marshall points out the power of men's formal and informal networks:

> While men have developed support networks for years, women have not done so. Men generally help other men climb the ladder—they take care of each other, they pass the lessons on, and they help others to achieve positions of influence. Unlike the woman who must prove herself over and over again, once men get into the club, they are protected. Men see this supportive behavior as expanding their sphere of influence. Women who have had very little experience in this kind of networking, perceive it as diminishing their sphere of influence. Because the competition is so keen, women have not been trained to support each other.

When older administrators select protegees for grooming as leaders, they seek to replicate themselves. Because the vast majority of established leaders are white males, women and minorities are unlikely to capture their attention. When mentoring is available, it can enhance women's career mobility. In a study of twenty-four female administrators, Judith Dodgson reported that "mentors were deemed extremely important when the women progressed from teacher to vice-principal." When reaching for senior administrative positions, mentors were not as necessary for encouragement, but served as advocates, confidants, and friends. According to Dodgson, "the principal must therefore be educated to understand the role of mentor and be encouraged to seek [female] protegees."

## Some Practical Problems

Overt discrimination is not the only cause for the small number of women in administration. The trend toward consolidation of schools has meant that fewer positions are available. Consolidation has been responsible for the closing of nearly 100,000 schools, many of them small, rural, and headed by women.

Another problem is the lack of timely and comprehensive data, which severely hampers efforts to document women's progress. As Yeakey and her colleagues observe,

> One consequence of the failure of policy-makers and researchers to recognize issues of gender and race is the absence of precise, comparative, current, and historical data on the numerical distribution of racial and ethnic minority group members and women in educational administration.

Through Project AWARE, the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) has recently filled the vacuum left by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), which regularly published survey data during the 1970s. (Because not all states are represented, data in this chapter should be interpreted with caution.)

Another problem for women has been the effort to attract more men into education, especially at the elementary level, supposedly to prevent the "feminization" of the schools. To attract men into the field, it was considered necessary to offer them the incentive of possible advancement. Men entering education thus compete with women for administrative positions; supposedly, the men *must* be promoted or they will leave the field, so their promotions often come at the expense of qualified women.

As a result, male principals frequently have less specific teaching experience than do women and serve for a shorter period, because they are upwardly mobile. This situation is particularly unfortunate because it prevents women from becoming principals and substitutes less-committed men.

In more than just a few principalships, we find a "bright young man" on the way up, who temporarily serves as principal. His primary concern is not to do the job well so much as to use it as an avenue for promotion. Over a decade ago, William Seawell and Robert Canada observed that the elementary principalship demanded extremely talented individuals committed to making this job a lifetime career, not just a rung on the administrative ladder. Today this problem is even more acute, as McCormick notes in her article on expected shortages of gifted school administrators. According to the administrators interviewed, many school executives are older than in the past, overburdened by job and family pressures, and choosing early retirement. Even worse, there don't seem to be as many bright teachers willing to enter administrative ranks.

If factors other than discrimination are responsible for the exclusion of women from administrative positions, the basic problem is still the secondary role women are assigned in all parts of society. What else can account for women's displacement by the closing of small schools? Similarly, why else should the opportunity for promotion be essential to the male educator, even as it limits the opportunities for qualified women?

## The Black Administrator: Still Segregated

"Common sense" suggests that the apparent successes of the civil

rights movement should have significantly improved the position of blacks in educational administration. Blacks were once the victims of systematic patterns of discrimination. But now, nearly thirty-five years after the Supreme Court's historic desegregation ruling in the case of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, individuals may still be prejudiced, but, in public institutions like school systems, surely the black educator is treated in the same way as everyone else.

This analysis is attractive because it is both plausible and optimistic. It implies that the situation is under control and that desirable changes are taking place. Unfortunately, such optimism can flourish only amidst ignorance. Since *Brown*, the number of black administrators has declined dramatically. This is most true of the decision-making positions, where the real power is in the hands of white males.

Just as nonblack racial minorities in school administration have been ignored by writers, so in recent years scant research has been directed at the situation of blacks in administration. The few studies that have addressed the subject tend to focus on black women administrators, evidence, perhaps, of the impact of the feminist movement and the limited effectiveness of affirmative action for minorities.

## Disappearance of the Black Leader

For many years, the southern pattern of "separate but equal" school systems tended to help the black school leader. The logic of segregation dictates the complete separation of the races. This can be accomplished only if black school systems are entirely black—teachers, students, superintendents, and principals. In addition, in a society in which racism is an institutionalized value, a principalship of a black school or superintendency of a black system could not seem very desirable to most whites. This fact, too, would help blacks become administrators, if only by default. The motivation may not have been commendable, but the result was that, in dual school systems, there were countless opportunities for black administrators.

This situation did not change immediately after the Supreme Court outlawed "separate but equal" systems, but once it became clear to the states that the decision could not be circumvented, the dual school systems were gradually dismantled. This dramatically altered the status of the black administrator. Blacks supervising other blacks may have been acceptable in the South, but the possibility of black officials giving orders to white teachers and overseeing the education of white students was virtually unthinkable.

The disappearance of the black administrator, though the Court could hardly have anticipated it, has clearly come about as the result of southern compliance with the *Brown* decision.

During the 1960s, as Gregory Coffin points out, "the number of black high school principals in 13 southern and border states dropped more than 90 percent....If casualties among black elementary school principals were included,

the result would be even worse," he states.

Thus, people who were qualified by training and experience to administer the new unified school systems were prevented from doing so because of their race. Many of the dismissed blacks undoubtedly were replaced by people less qualified, except for the vital racial criterion, to run the schools. The loss of expertise and resulting decline in educational quality are incalculable.

By 1975 things were not much better. At that time, Samuel Ethridge calculated that to reach "equity and parity" (that is, for the percentage of black principals to equal the percentage of blacks in the total population) the nation would have to hire 5,368 more black principals. Almost half this number were needed in the seventeen southern and border states.

Data showing the pattern of representation of blacks in school leadership positions during the past decade are listed in table 2. Jones and Montenegro's most recent survey shows that only about 1 percent of superintendents and about 10 percent of principals are black. Moreover, the improvement that we noted in women's representation in administrative positions is not as evident in the case of blacks, whose representation has increased only slightly during this decade. Indeed, Feistritzer's data (inexplicably differing from those of Jones and Montenegro) show that only 6 percent of principals are black, a decrease from 1978, when, according to EEOC data, 8.3 percent were [illegible]

**Table 2. Representation of Blacks in Educational Administration**

| *Survey Date* | *Source* | *Superintendents* | *Assistant Superintendents* | *Principals* | *All Administrators* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1987-88 | Jones & Montenegro (1988) | 1.16 | 7.16 | 10.26 | 9.95 |
| 1987-88 | Feistritzer (1988) | 1 | — | 6 | — |
| 1984-85 | Jones & Montenegro (1985) | 1 | 6.5 | 9.79 | 9.11 |
| 1981-82 | Jones & Montenegro (1985) | .7 | 6.5 | 7.7 | 8 |
| 1978 | EEOC data from Jones & Montenegro (1985) | — | — | 8.3 | — |

*All figures are percentages.*

More than quality education disappeared with the black principal. In the Old South, educational administration was one of the few vocations in which

a black could achieve affluence, power, and middle-class respectability, and this opportunity vanished. In addition, a black principal was often the most prominent black citizen, a community leader. Finally, for black children, the black educator was often the only available role model that suggested it was possible for a black to exercise authority or leadership, and this, too, was lost.

The loss of administrative ability and community leadership was nearly absolute, since the talents of displaced blacks were almost always discarded by the school systems. According to J. C. James, a black principal might be transferred to the central office of a district as "the highly visible token of desegregation," or, worse, given "some other title completely foreign to all known educational terminology, a desk, a secretary, no specified responsibilities or authority, with a quiet prayer that he will somehow just go away." Doubtless any black administrator with ambition and self-respect would himself echo that quiet prayer.

## Laws Change: Discrimination Persists

As the legal system of segregation has broken down, it has been replaced by urban segregation based on residential patterns. The white, male decision-makers in many of these systems have, like their southern predecessors, decided that these all-black schools are appropriate places for black administrators.

Thus the belief that blacks are capable of supervising only black districts remains as strong as ever. In the seventies, Charles Moody examined twenty-one major school systems with black superintendents, seventeen regular and four acting. In each of these systems, the majority of the students were black, and every permanent superintendent worked in a community where more than half the residents were black. In addition, most of the districts had black majorities on their school boards.

Moody discovered several other facts about these districts that may explain why they were considered suitable for black superintendents. Virtually all the superintendents he studied had taken over districts with serious financial problems. From the evidence, he concludes that "when blacks are appointed it is often just because the district is unattractive." In addition, "black superintendents are not appointed in districts which provide them with the time and resources to develop educational programs relevant to their school community."

Black officials at all levels share a number of problems: difficult schools, ambiguous roles, and the unrealistic expectations of others. Robert Chapman reported on a study that compared what others expected of black principals in an urban school system with what the principals expected of themselves. The study showed that district administrators and most people in the black community expected the new principals to make a far greater difference in the schools than the principals themselves anticipated making. Thus the new black officials were placed in difficult situations to begin with

and then confronted with the unreasonable expectations of others. In such a situation, someone is bound to be disappointed, and the principal's relative or "perceived" failure seems virtually inevitable.

The ambiguous role assigned to the black administrator is best illustrated by Robert Frelow's analysis of the plight of a typical black administrator below the rank of principal. The primary assignment for the new official was to serve as liaison to dissident black students in a school with a biracial enrollment and a primarily white staff. He was successful in this assignment but was not rewarded for his professional skill. Instead, it became clear that, by dealing with a specific group of students, he had provided his superiors with "a rationale for his exclusion from decisions that affect the whole system. He has, in effect, defined a peripheral involvement for himself." This kind of doublethink, which can turn success into failure, is typical of the way white supervisors treat black administrators.

This problem illustrates the need for blacks in the highest decision-making positions in school systems. Until blacks enter the real power positions, the role of all black administrators will remain peripheral. But the evidence that this has not yet happened is overwhelming. Frelow says, "only in a few instances have school districts chosen to employ blacks in decision-making, policy-influencing positions."

In his 1983 article, Charles Moody advises blacks who aspire to the superintendency on how to get into positions of power. The key is a networking process like the one needed by women:

> Black superintendents, consultants, professors, and other leaders can serve as encouragers, sponsors, nominators, and advisors to other Blacks. We must accept the fact that there is nothing illegal, immoral, or illicit about serving in one or all of those capacities to facilitate the career development and mobility of another Black.

The lack of blacks in policy-making positions flies in the face of studies showing that minorities have strong qualifications for management positions. After studying more than one hundred white and minority managers, John Miner concluded that minorities in management have unusually strong motivation to become managers. And Edward Adams found that black managers were perceived by their subordinates as exhibiting more consideration behavior (behavior indicative of friendship, mutual trust, respect, and warmth) than did white managers.

Since the late seventies, it has been more and more difficult to find even the most basic data or information on blacks in educational administration. The literature is strangely silent on the topic. In the face of such frightening problems as declining enrollment and resources and public loss of confidence in the schools, interest in the problems of minorities has waned. Yet there is no reason to believe that the problem has been or is being solved. Although a few very visible blacks have achieved token administrative positions, the decline in the number of positions available makes it impossible for enough

minority administrators to be hired to accomplish anything close to equity. Moreover, unlike the situation with women, very few minority graduate students are in the "pipeline" for administrative positions. And if the policy of "last hired, first fired" continues to be invoked in times of retrenchment, the situation will get even worse.

It seems that very little has changed. The location of the all-black school systems may have moved from the South to the cities, but these remain the only systems with room for black administrators. A black educator's chance of being appointed superintendent in a "white" district is probably not much greater now than it was when the Supreme Court issued its ruling in the case of *Brown*.

## A Program for Change

Although the only permanent solution to the problems of women and minorities in school leadership is their inclusion in the decision-making process, there should be other, more immediate ways of improving the situation. Gradually, as more women and members of minority groups work into leadership positions, their acceptability in such positions will increase. In addition, if they gain some "line" positions, jobs that ordinarily lead to promotions, they will enter the pool of potential decision-makers.

The outlook is not encouraging, however, despite the 1972 Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Act and the special efforts of affirmative action to redress racial imbalances. Ruth Cimperman expresses some common concerns:

> We seem to be losing whatever gains were made in the consciousness-raising 1970's and slipping backward in time to the 1950's norms of male and female roles. In fact, regulatory bodies, employers, and even women are becoming less concerned with equal rights and affirmative action policies.

Affirmative action policies have been criticized for lack of effectiveness, distasteful compliance mechanisms, and advocacy of preferential treatment. According to Carter Wilson, the policy's major problem is lack of commitment, since it "exists primarily in the realm of public discourse and not in the realm of political reality."

Seeing "nonpreferential" affirmative action as a logical next step, Jonathan S. Leonard documents occupational advances in both the public and private sectors between 1974 and 1980. According to Leonard, progress was substantial, considering the program's lack of "public consensus and vigorous consistent enforcement":

> The lesson drawn is that affirmative action programs work best when they are vigorously enforced, when they work together with other policies that augment the skills of members of protected groups, and when they work with growing employers.

One obvious way to produce change is by adopting corrective laws and regulations. Unfortunately, specific cases of discrimination are difficult to detect and nearly impossible to prove. Although the 1963 Equal Pay Act and Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act were enacted twenty-five years ago, women's earnings have remained at 55 to 65 percent of men's wages. Clearly, laws alone will not bring about meaningful change.

In the previous edition of this chapter we proposed a six-point program to promote equality of opportunity for women and minorities:

- establish the hiring of women and minority administrators as a definite priority
- eliminate all forms of discriminatory treatment, such as different pay for equal work and enforced maternity leaves
- work for the establishment of a clearinghouse where the names of qualified women and minorities will be available
- establish a policy of actively recruiting women and minorities for administrative jobs
- encourage colleges of education to train more women and minority men for these jobs and adopt programs to meet their particular needs
- work to develop internship programs for potential administrators

In the remainder of this section, we assess progress that has been made toward reaching these objectives and point out work that remains to be done.

## Priority on Hiring Women and Minorities

The first point has recently been given teeth by a Supreme Court decision that makes it possible for an employer to hire women and minorities to correct an imbalance in the work force. *The New York Times* (March 26, 1987) noted, "The ruling also marked the first time the Court had unambiguously held that without any proof of past discrimination against women or minorities by a particular employer, the employer may use racial and sexual preferences in hiring and promotions to bring its work force into line with the makeup of the local population or labor market."

Because employers still are not *required* to address racial or gender work force imbalances, it is difficult to predict the effectiveness of the new ruling.

Congress' passage in 1988 of the Civil Rights Restoration Act, which broadens the original Civil Rights Act of 1964, is likely to benefit minorities and women seeking employment in the public sector. The new law clearly specifies that *all* programs within any institution receiving federal funds must not discriminate on the basis of age, race, sex, or handicap. This new law might revive public institutions' commitment to affirmative action.

## Elimination of Pay Inequities

The second point calls for nothing less than a complete restructuring of the American labor market. Despite legal and economic drawbacks, "comparable worth" has been proposed as a potential solution to pay inequity and job segregation problems. According to Carole Makela, the comparable worth debate has tried to balance "the interests of women and minorities against the interests of the economy as a whole":

> Arguments center around discrimination in pay in "women's occupations" versus the feasibility of systems for defining "worth" and the problems of finding resources to achieve equity once comparable worth is accepted in the population.

Julie Underwood O'Hara reviews occupational segregation and antidiscrimination legislation, focusing on women's failure to achieve pay equity or comparable worth through the courts. Although school districts are obliged to correct pay discrepancies involving comparable *work*, they are not compelled, unless mandated by state law, "to investigate or rectify occupational segregation in the school system or sex-based wage gaps," she says.

In the long run, equal pay for work of comparable value may be less significant than the more generic concept of equal pay for equal work promoted in the 1963 Equal Pay Act. Researchers Sheila Tobias and Sharon Bernstein Megdal warn pay equity proponents not to make comparable worth their entire agenda. They note that women *are* gaining access to administrative positions with control over hiring decisions, that "girls have different role models than their mothers," and that wage-sensitive women are making responsible decisions to lobby for more money, find new jobs, or enter other occupations. Barton Gethmann also argues against artificial means of "increasing pay rates of occupationally segregated women," because this practice could remove the incentive for women to pursue less traditional employment options. Educational administration is one such option for both women and minorities dissatisfied with teaching or other "deadend" jobs.

Another economic hardship that falls unequally on women who work is the unavailability of child care. American working women lack two major benefits available to women of most other highly industrialized countries—government-subsidized child care programs and paid maternity leaves. Valerie Polakow Suransky notes that "the U.S. has one of the most underdeveloped systems of child care in the western world."

## Clearinghouse for Women and Minority Candidates

The third point, the creation of a clearinghouse for qualified candidates (both women and minorities), has not progressed beyond the idea stage. Such a central clearinghouse, containing the names of all available women and

minorities aspiring to administrative positions, could be an aid to districts' recruiting efforts. Until such a national clearinghouse is established, school districts could send announcements of administrative openings to such organizations as the Northwest Women in Educational Administration (NWEA), the Southern Coalition for Educational Equity, the National Conference on Women in Education, the New England Coalition of Educational Leaders, Inc., the National Alliance of Black School Educators, the Career Women in Education, the Ford Foundation, and the American Association of School Administrators.

## Active Recruitment

Because traditional recruitment methods have not solved and in fact may have contributed to the problem of women and minority representation in leadership positions, school districts must explore creative means of recruiting able candidates from these categories. One recruitment method, the use of consultants, is particularly problematic in the case of blacks, as Moody stated in 1983:

> If the most respected consultants are white, and they, for the most part are employed at the elite colleges and universities, which the majority of Blacks do not attend, then it would seem logical that Blacks would not be among the pool of students from which their nominations would be made.

So the issue becomes not a matter of simply having the necessary credentials but of having the "right" credentials from the best schools. And the best schools are, for the most part, private and expensive. It is difficult to be part of the all powerful "old boys network" if one lacks the financial status to obtain the prerequisites to power.

Research on the recruitment of women and minorities stresses, again and again, the need for networking, a means by which blacks and women can counter the old boys network by creating their own system, designed to help minorities help themselves. Moody recommends that:

> Black educational organizations such as the National Alliance of Black School Educators must develop a unit that will serve as a resource to school boards on a contractual basis in the selection of superintendents. Blacks who have served as consultants must become mentors to other aspiring Blacks. They must teach them how to be effective members of selection committees.

June Gabler refers to Judith E. Palmer's stages of growth in women's awareness and the need for a sixth "professional" stage. At this "professional" stage,

> the woman who has arrived works consciously to ensure a continuous flow of able new talent for the future. The "old boys" give the professional stage its due with their network, and there is no reason that "old girls" cannot do the same. Ultimately, of course, it

should be an "old peoples" network.

Whether recruiting women or minorities, school districts should establish informal contacts in colleges of education and also accept the occasional need to train the right person to meet the formal requirements of a position. Raymond Calabrese recommends that school officials also encourage aspirants to develop a strategic career plan that takes political realities into account. For example, certain communities may not be ready to hire female or minority administrators, while others may be more amenable to diversifying their administrative ranks.

See chapter 3 for additional suggestions of ways school districts can recruit, groom, and select the most qualified candidates, regardless of their sex or race.

## Training Programs

The fifth point, that of revamping educational administration programs to train more women and minorities, is an absolute must. Concern about future school leadership has prompted the formation of at least one national commission favorable to minorities' and women's interests. The National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration—representing school executives, universities, teacher unions, school boards, and governors—in 1987 released its report, *Leaders for America's Schools*, published by the University Council for Educational Administration.

Among the report's recommendations are defining educational leadership, establishing a National Policy Board on Educational Administration, and initiating recruitment programs for women and ethnic minorities. The report urges school districts and professional organizations to identify promising minority and women candidates for administrative positions. At the same time, the report says, state and federal policy-makers should tighten affirmative action compliance and provide scholarships and fellowships that would encourage ethnic minorities to choose educational administration as a career. Universities and the private sector should also provide financial aid and other incentives to attract minority administration candidates.

Charol Shakeshaft (1987) recommends several practical steps educational administration training programs can take to better serve women: expanding course content to encompass women's administrative experiences, case studies of women administrators, and women speakers; interning women students with women administrators; encouraging research on women's managerial styles; adding women to educational administration faculties; and sponsoring workshops to help incorporate research on women into curricular materials. Although aimed at helping women, many of these suggestions also could be applied to minority men.

## Internship Programs

Internship programs are particularly useful for women and minority aspiring administrators because they provide needed experience that is often denied these groups.

One example of an experimental internship program for women is the "Castle Hot Springs" training program described by Christa Metzger. Funded by the Ford Foundation, this Arizona-based program trained 238 women for administrative positions over a five-year period. The workshop agenda was built primarily around activities that simulated a job search. It also taught skills such as interviewing for a job and writing a resumé. Volunteer consultants were available during the program. According to Metzger, the program "changed the attitudes of potential and current women administrators about their own worth and their career opportunities."

Increasing numbers of new (first- and second-year) Arizona principals are graduates of the Castle Hot Springs workshop: 25 percent in the fall of 1980, 35 percent in 1981, 39 percent in 1983, and 48 percent in 1984. It is clear that this type of training is needed and effective for women and minority groups who have not had the benefit of an "old boys" network that could be counted on to pass certain skills and attitudes on, generation to generation.

Assessment centers, another form of internship training, are also helping to bridge the "experience" gap. The history of women and minorities suggests that both groups have often faced job rejection because of lack of appropriate experience, proving the old saw: You can't get the job without experience and you can't get experience without the job. Assessment centers are a way of breaking out of this vicious circle. M. Claradine Johnson and Rex Douglas report that "several of the women who received promotions as a result of the center experience indicated that data provided by the center represented the only evidence of administrative skills in their credentials."

Such experience not only offers the participants useful job preparation, but also gives them a chance to measure their real desire for the job in light of the actual responsibilities and pressures involved. In addition, it gives evidence of practical ability rather than abstract potential and so should promote better hiring decisions.

Ultimately, the solution to the problem of discrimination depends on the willingness of public education to commit itself to change. Once such a commitment has been made, a specific program, based on the circumstances in each school system, should not be difficult to devise.

# Conclusion

The status of women and minorities in school administration seems clearly inconsistent with the ideals of a democratic, egalitarian society. But discrimination in this area is not merely morally repugnant; practically, it is destructive, since it narrows the base from which school leadership can be

drawn.

Blacks and women alike suffer from stereotypes, but those stereotypes are not identical. The role of blacks in administration is limited by the fundamental assumption that the races should be separated. There are jobs for black administrators, but few of these jobs include supervising white teachers or students.

Although working women have gradually demolished the wife-and-mother stereotype, their status has not necessarily improved. The vast majority of women workers are relegated to low-status, low-paying jobs and retain primary responsibility for housework, food preparation, and child care. Women who do manage to overcome role-discrimination and ascend to administrative heights risk being labeled "pushy" or "superwomen" for trying to have it all. When entrusted with the "male" supervisory roles, women must often waste precious time and energy proving themselves over and over again to skeptical bosses, board members, or coworkers.

There are several ways in which this situation can change. One way is to reverse the pattern of white "male-defined" research that contributes, in large part, to discrimination in the first place. Second, women and minorities can develop networking systems to combat the "old boys" network that has kept them out of policy-making positions for so long. And finally, the public school systems, inspired by the recent Supreme Court decision and the new Civil Rights legislation, can implement fairer hiring policies aimed at correcting the imbalance that exists in the work force.

The problem of underrepresentation of women and minorities in positions of educational leadership will cease only when sex or race is irrelevant in hiring, when qualified women and minorities are as routinely included in the decision-making process as white males are today.